

COMSTOCK WANTS TO TELL ABOUT WHITE AND OTHERS

He Was Investigating Revelry in Madison Square Tower.

THAW HAD URGED HIM ON

But Progress Was Slow and Thaw Seemed Discontented—Sought Comstock More Than a Year Ago.

Anthony Comstock, head of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, told a TIMES reporter at his home in Summit, N. J., late yesterday that he has testimony damaging to the character of the late Stanford White and three of his associates, and that if he is subpoenaed he will give that testimony to the Grand Jury. Mr. Comstock said that it concerned "revolting orgies" held in Mr. White's studio in the tower of Madison Square Garden, which he investigated when prompted by statements made to him by Harry Kendall Thaw relative to "atrocities perpetrated upon girls" in that studio.

"About a year and a half ago," said Mr. Comstock, "Thaw came to me and complained about White's actions. He was not married to Evelyn Nesbit then. Thaw declared that White was in the habit of luring young girls, some of them under age, to his studio, and he gave me the names and addresses of some of the girls. After his marriage he came to me many times with further evidence against White. He saw me again about two weeks before the murder.

"As to Thaw's purpose in furnishing me with this evidence against White, I firmly believe it was prompted by the purest motives. He was apparently shocked at the atrocities he knew White was guilty of, and seemed to think that White was a monster who ought to be put out of the community. Do not misunderstand that expression. I do not mean that Thaw thought White should be murdered, but that he should be taken out of the community by legal process and put in prison. Thaw seemed to have an awful weight upon his heart when he visited me, but I was unable to fathom it, and he never volunteered any information on the subject.

"I do not think he had any personal motive for the action he was taking. When he first came to me he appeared to have only a speaking acquaintance with White. He seemed to have obtained his information concerning White either from the girls themselves or by hearsay. He never made any reference to his wife in connection with Stanford White or in any other way before or after his marriage, either directly or indirectly.

"On the strength of his information and from that received in anonymous letters, which corroborated Thaw's statements, I endeavored to get at the truth about White, with a view to securing a conviction if possible. First, I made application for a room in the tower of Madison Square Garden next to the rooms occupied by Stanford White. The application was not made in my name, but in that of one of my assistants. There was a long waiting list, and before we could obtain the room the White studio was temporarily closed. My men had probably become too familiar with the janitor, and accidentally dropped some intimation of our purpose. I did succeed, however, in posting two men in the tower, who gathered much incriminatory evidence against White and his associates in connection with their midnight revelry.

"Then I looked up the girls whom Thaw said White had ruined. I will not say where White got the girls. Several of them were under age and of respectable families. I interviewed some of these girls and obtained statements from them. But when it came to preparing a case against White many difficulties confronted me. Family influences were instrumental in checking some of the girls from consenting to appear in court against White. Some of the girls were spirited away. The result was that, although I was morally convinced of White's guilt, I had no substantial evidence to offer in a legal action which would make a conviction certain. I was therefore compelled to drop the idea of having White indicted on the evidence I had obtained.

"My ill-success in not bringing White to trial seemed to depress Thaw. As to whether I believe this depression caused Thaw to commit the murder I do not care to say.

"Never, however, in all my investigations, did I hear anything against Mrs. Thaw, and everything I heard about Thaw himself was highly commendable to him. I never met White."

"There is no truth in the statement that this murder will give added impetus to our investigations," Mr. Comstock added. "We will go right on with our cases against all such persons, whether they be prominent or otherwise. We do not announce our investigations with a drum. Whether we have information of cases similar to those I have mentioned I refuse to say. I know, however, of men high in society and greatly respected in the business world who engage in reprehensible acts. I intend to proceed against them if I can secure satisfactory evidence."